

We Claim:

1. A method for managing a remote data processing system via a communications network, the method comprising:

communicating with a remote data processing system associated
5 with a trading partner on at least one technical parameter of the remote data processing system;

receiving a report message on the at least one technical parameter via the communications network; and

interpreting the report message for presentation on a user
10 interface to coordinate the management of the at least one technical parameter for trading partners within a trading group.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the communicating
comprises polling a remote business-to-business server as the remote data
processing system to obtain the at least one technical parameter concerning an
operational status of at least one of software and hardware of the remote business-
15 to-business server.

3. The method according to claim 1 wherein the communicating
comprises polling a remote business-to-business server at the remote data
processing system to obtain the at least one technical parameter of at least one of
software and hardware of the remote business-to-business server.
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4. The method according to claim 1 further comprising presenting the
report message on the user interface for review.

5. The method according to claim 1 wherein the at least one technical
parameter comprises one or more of the following: hardware configuration of the
remote data processing system, hardware configuration of a base data processing
system, software configuration of the remote data processing system, software
25 configuration of the base data processing system, an installed version of a remote

software module, an installed version of a base software module, an installed type of remote software module, an installed type of base software module, operational status data, performance metric data on performance of the remote data processing system, and performance metric data on performance of the base data processing system.

6. The method according to claim 1 wherein the at least one technical parameter comprises operational status data of at least one of the remote data processing system, a base data processing system, and the communications network.

7. A method for managing a remote data processing system via a communications network, the method comprising:
receiving a report message containing technical parameter data on a remote data processing system via the communications network;
retrieving reference technical parameter data from a reference parameters storage based on the report message; and
determining whether the received technical parameter data of the report data message complies with the retrieved reference technical parameter data.

8. The method according to claim 7 further comprising the step of:
polling a remote data processing system associated with a trading partner on the technical parameter data of the remote data processing system.

9. The method according to claim 7 further comprising:
sending a revision to the remote data processing system if at least one software component is noncompliant with the reference technical parameter data.

10. The method according to claim 7 further comprising:

sending an upgrade software module to the remote data processing system if the same types of software modules are not specified in the reference technical parameter data and the received technical parameter data.

11. The method according to claim 9 further comprising:

installing the upgrade software module after receipt of confirmation that a requisite hardware upgrade for supporting the upgrade software module has been successfully completed.

12. The method according to claim 7 further comprising:

delaying a transmission of a revision to the remote data processing system if the same software components are not specified in the reference technical parameter data and the received technical parameter data and if the remote data processing system requires a hardware upgrade to support the revision.

13. The method according to claim 7 further comprising:

sending a desired version of an upgrade software module to the remote data processing system if the same versions of software modules are not specified in the reference technical parameter data and the received technical parameter data.

14. The method according to claim 13 further comprising:

installing the desired version of the upgrade software module after receipt of confirmation that a requisite hardware upgrade for supporting the desired version of the upgrade software module has been successfully completed.

15. The method according to claim 7 further comprising:

delaying a transmission of a desired version of an upgrade software module to the remote data processing system if the same versions of software modules are not specified in the reference technical parameter data and the received technical parameter data and if the remote data processing system

requires a hardware upgrade to support the desired version of the upgrade software module.

16. The method according to claim 7 further comprising:
revising the reference parameters storage such that a reference
configuration is defined by the technical parameter data and includes a new feature
for installation at the remote data processing system.

17. A system for managing a remote data processing system via a
communications network, the system comprising:

a managing communications interface for supporting
communication with a remote data processing system associated with a trading
partner on at least one technical parameter of the remote data processing system;

a monitor for receiving a report message on the at least one
technical parameter via the communications network; and

an interpreter for interpreting the report message for presentation on
a user interface.

18. The system according to claim 17 wherein the remote data
processing system comprises a remote business-to-business server.

19. The system according to claim 17 further comprising a presentation
module for preparing a presentation of the report message on the user interface for
review.

20. The system according to claim 17 wherein the technical parameters
comprise one or more of the following: hardware configuration of the remote data
processing system, hardware configuration of a base data processing system,
software configuration of the remote data processing system, software
configuration of the base data processing system, an installed version of a remote
software module, an installed version of a base software module, an installed type
of remote software module, an installed type of base software module, operational

status data, performance metric data on performance of the remote data processing system, and performance metric data on performance of the base data processing system.

21. The system according to claim 17 wherein the at least one technical parameter comprises operational status data.

22. A system for managing a remote data processing system via a communications network, the system comprising:

a monitor for receiving a report message on at least one technical parameter of a remote data processing system via the communications network;

a data manager for retrieving reference technical parameter data from a reference parameters storage; and

a data processor for determining whether the received technical parameter data of the report data message complies with the retrieved reference technical parameter data.

23. The system according to claim 22 further comprising the step of:
a base communications interface adapted to poll the remote data processing system associated with a trading partner on the at least one technical parameter of the remote data processing system.

24. The system according to claim 22 further comprising:
a managing communications interface for sending a revision to the remote data processing system if the data processor determined that the same software modules are not specified in the reference technical parameter data and the received technical parameter data.

25. The system according to claim 22 further comprising:
a managing communications interface for sending a revision to the remote data processing system if the data processor determined that the same

software type of software modules are not specified in the reference technical parameter data and the received technical parameter data.

26. The system according to claim 22 further comprising:

a managing communications interface for sending a revision to the remote data processing system if the data processor determined that the same version of software modules are not specified in the reference technical parameter data and the received technical parameter data.

27. The system according to claim 22 wherein the data processor is

coupled to a storage device, the storage device including at least one of a reference parameters storage, a received parameters storage, and an upgrade module storage for storing upgrade software modules.

28. The system according to claim 22 wherein the data manager and a

user interface support a user's revision of reference parameters of the reference parameters storage to add, delete, or modify at least one software feature of the remote data processing system.